

A
SERMON
Preached before the
KING and QUEEN

A T
W H I T E - H A L L,
The 27th of **O C T O B E R,**
Being the Day appointed for a
Publick Thanksgiving to Almighty God,
For the Signal Victory at S E A :
For the Preservation of His Majesty's Sacred Person,
And for His safe Return to His People.

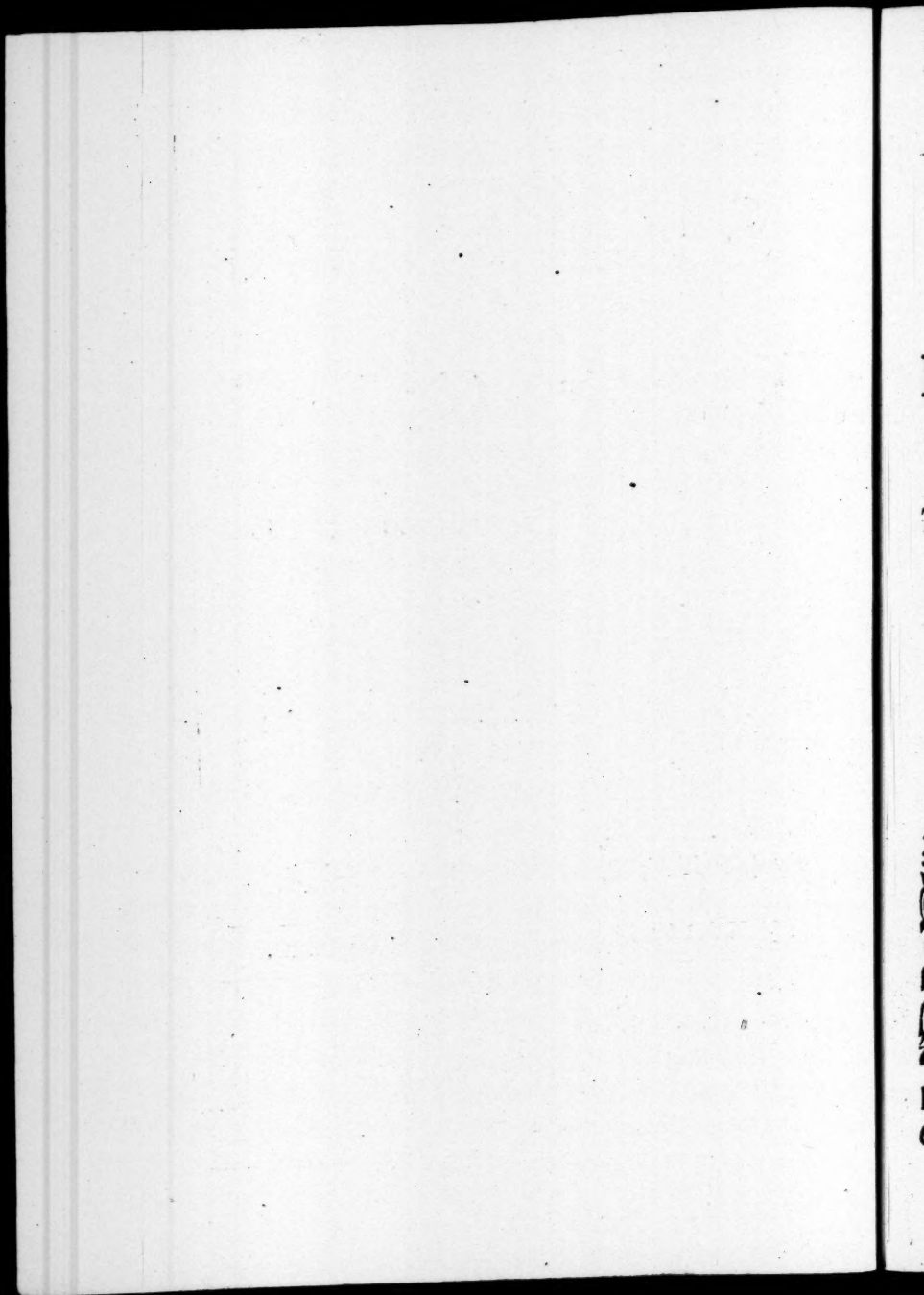
Tillotson, John, Bp. of Canterbury

By **JOHN**, Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*.

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A
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Preached before the
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J E R E M. IX. 23, 24.

Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, That he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord, which exercise lovingkindness, and judgment, and righteousness in the earth: For in these things I delight, saith the Lord.



THESE words are a message from God sent by his Prophet to the People of the Jews, who trusted in their own *Wisdom* and *Might* and *Riches* for their safety and preservation from that Destruction which, in the former part of this Chapter, God had threatē'd to bring upon them

them by the King of Babylon. To take them off from this vain confidence is this Message sent to them, Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, That he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord, which exercise lovingkindness and judgment and righteousness in the Earth: For in these things I delight, saith the Lord.

In the handling of these Words, I shall abstract from the particular Occasion of them, and only consider the general Truth contained in them: Which I shall do under these two Heads.

First, What we are not to glory in: Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches.

Secondly, What it is that is matter of true glory: But let him that glorieth glory in this, That he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord, which exercise lovingkindness, and judgment, and righteousness in the Earth.

I. What

I. *What we are not to glory in.* The Text instant-
ceth in *three* things which are the great Idols of
mankind, and in which they are very apt to
pride themselves and to place their confidence,
namely, *Wisdom*, and *Might*, and *Riches*. I
shall consider these severally, and shew how
little reason there is to glory in any of them.

1. *Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom.* This I.
may comprehend both human knowledg, and
likewise prudence in the management of af-
fairs. We will suppose both these to be in-
tended here by the name of *Wisdom*, *Let not the*
wise man glory in his wisdom, that is, neither in the
largeness and compass of his knowledg and
understanding, nor in his skill and dexterity in
the contrivance and conduct of human af-
fairs: And that for these *two* reasons,

First, Because the highest pitch of human
knowledg and wisdom is very imperfect.

Secondly, Because when knowledg and wis-
dom are with much difficulty in any competent
measure attained, how easily are they lost?

First, the highest pitch of human knowledg and
wisdom is very imperfect. Our Ignorance doth
vastly exceed our knowledg at the best. Wis-
dom

dom in any tolerable degree is difficult to be attain'd, but perfection in it utterly to be despair'd of. Where is there to be found so strong and sound a head, as hath no soft place; so perfect, so clear an understanding as hath no flaw, no dark water in it? How hard a matter is it to be truly wise? And yet there are so many pretenders to wisdom as would almost tempt a man to think that nothing is easier. Men do frequently murmur and repine at the unequal distribution of other things, as of health and strength, of power and riches: But if we will trust the judgment of most men concerning themselves, nothing is more equally shar'd among mankind than a good degree of wisdom and understanding. Many will grant others to be superior to them in other gifts of Nature, as in bodily strength and stature; and in the gifts of Fortune, as in riches and honour; because the difference between one man and another in these qualities is many times so gross and palpable, that no body hath the face to deny it: But very few in comparison, unless it be in mere complement and civility, will yield others to be wiser than themselves; and yet the difference in this also is for the most part very visible to every body but themselves.

So

So that true Wisdom is a thing very extraordinary. Happy are they that have it : And, next to them, not those many that think they have it, but those few that are sensible of their own defects and imperfections and know that they have it not.

And among all the kinds of Wisdom none is more nice and difficult, and meets with more frequent disappointments, than that which men are most apt to pride themselves in, I mean *Political* wisdom and prudence ; because it depends upon so many contingent causes, any one of which failing the best laid design breaks and falls in pieces : It depends upon the uncertain wills and fickle humours, the mistaken and mutable interests of men, which are perpetually shifting from one point to another, so that no body knows where to find them : Besides an unaccountable mixture of that which the *Heathen* call'd *Fortune*, but we *Christians* by its true name, the *Providence* of God ; which does frequently interpose in human affairs, and loves to confound the wisdom of the wise, and to turn their counsels into foolishness.

Of this we have a most remarkable Example in *Achitophel*, of whose wisdom the *Scripture* gives this extraordinary testimony, That the

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counsel

counsel which he counselled in those days was as if one had enquired at the Oracle of God: Such was all the counsel of Achitophel both with David and with Absalom. It seems he gave very good counsel also to Absalom, and because he would not follow it was discontented to that degree as to lay violent hands upon himself: And now who would pride himself in being so very wise as to be able to give the best counsel in the world, and yet so very weak as to make away himself because he to whom it was given was not wise enough to take it?

The like miscarriages often happen in point of Military skill and prudence. A great Prince or General is sometimes so very cautious and wary, that nothing can provoke him to a Battel; and then at another time, and perhaps in another Element, so rash and wilful that nothing can hinder him from fighting and being beaten: As if the two Elements made the difference; and caution were great wisdom at Land, and confidence and presumption great prudence at Sea. But the true reason of these things lies much deeper, in the secret Providence of Almighty God, who when he pleaseth can so govern and over-rule both the understandings and the wills of men, as shall best serve his own wise purpose and design. And

And as the highest pitch of human Wisdom is very imperfect in it self, so is it much more so in comparison with the Divine knowledg and wisdom: Compar'd with this it is mere folly, and less than the understanding and wisdom of a child to that of the wisest man. *The foolishness of God, says St. Paul, is wiser than men,* ^{1 Cor. 1. 25.} that is, the least grain of Divine wisdom is infinitely beyond all the wisdom of men: But in opposition to the wisdom of God, the wisdom of men is less than nothing and vanity. Let men design things never so prudently, and make them never so sure, even to the *Popish* and *French* degree of infallibility; let them reckon upon it as *a Blow that cannot fail*: Yet after all, the counsel of the Lord *that shall stand*, and he will do all his pleasure; *for there is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord.*

And now we may ask the Question which *Job* does, *Where shall wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding?* And we must answer it as he does, *It is not to be found in the land of the living:* unless it be that one infallible Point of Wisdom to which God directs every man, and of which every man is capable, viz. Religion and the fear of God, *Unto man he said,* ^{Job 28.}

Behold! the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

Secondly, *When knowledg and wisdom are with great difficulty in any competent measure attain'd, how easily are they lost?* By a disease, by a blow upon the head; by a sudden and violent passion, which may disorder the strongest Brain and confound the clearest Understanding in a moment: Nay even the excess of knowledg and wisdom, especially if attended with pride as too often it is, is very dangerous and does many times border upon distraction and run into madness: Like an *Athletick* constitution and perfect state of health, which is observ'd by *Physicians* to verge upon some dangerous disease, and to be a forerunner of it.

And when a man's understanding is once craz'd and shatter'd, how are the finest notions and thoughts of the wisest man blunder'd and broken, perplex'd and entangled? like a puzzl'd lump of silk, so that the man cannot draw out a thought to any length, but is forc'd to break it off and to begin at another end. Upon all which and many more accounts, *Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom*, which is so very imperfect; so hard to be attain'd, and yet so easie to be lost.

2. *Neither let the mighty man glory in his might.* 2.
Which whether it be meant of natural strength of body, or of military force and power, how weak and imperfect is it, and how frequently foil'd by an unequal strength?

If we understand it of the natural strength of mens bodies, how little reason is there to glory in that, in which so many of the Creatures below us do by so many degrees excell us? In that, which may so many ways be lost; by sickness, by a maime, and by many other external accidents; and which however will decay of it self, and by age sink into infirmity and weakness.

And how little reason is there to glory in that, which is so frequently foil'd by an unequal strength? of which *Goliath* is a famous Instance. When he defied the Host of *Israel*, and would needs have the matter decided by single Combat, God inspired *David* to accept the Challenge; who tho he was no wise comparable to him in strength, and would have been nothing in his hands in close fight, yet God directed him to assail him at a distance by a weapon that was too hard for him, a stone out of a sling, which struck the Giant in the forehead and brought his unweildy bulk down to the earth.

Or

Or if by *might* we understand military force and power, how little likewise is that to be gloried in? considering the uncertain events of War, and how very often and remarkably the Providence of God doth interpose to cast the Victory on the unlikely Side. It is *Solomon's* observation, that such are the interpositions of Divine Providence in human Affairs, that Event of things is many times not at all answerable to the power and probability of second Causes: *I returned, says he, and saw under the Sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battel to the strong.*

Ecd. 9.
11.

And one way, among many others, whereby the Providence of God doth often interpose to decide the events of War, is by a remarkable change of the Seasons and Weather in favour of one Side: As by sending great Snows, or violent Rains, to hinder the early motion and march of a powerful Army, to the disappointment or prejudice of some great Design: By remarkable Winds and Storms at Sea, to prevent the conjunction of a powerful Fleet: and by governing all these for a long time together so visibly to the advantage of one Side as utterly to defeat the well laid design of the other. Of all which, by the great mercy and goodness of God to us, we have had the happy experience in
all

all our late signal Deliverances and Victories.

And here I cannot but take notice of a passage to this purpose in the Book of *Job*: Which may deserve our more attentive regard and consideration, because I take this Book to be incomparably the most ancient of all other, and much elder than *Moses*: And yet it is written with as lively a sense of the Providence of God, and as noble Figures and flights of Eloquence as perhaps any Book extant in the world. The *Passage* I mean is, where God to convince *Job* of his ignorance in the secrets of Nature and Providence poseth him with many hard Questions, and with this amongst the rest, *Hast thou entred into the* Job 38.
treasures of the Snow? hast thou seen the treasures of ^{22, 23.}
the Hyle? which I have reserv'd against the time of trouble, against the Day of Battel and War. The meaning of which is, that the Providence of God doth sometimes interpose to determine the events of War, by governing the Seasons and the Weather, and by making the Snows and Rains, *the Winds and Storms to fulfil his word and to execute his pleasure.*

Of this we have a remarkable Instance in the defeat of *Sisera's* mighty Army; against whom, in the Song of *Deborah*, the Stars are said to have fought in their courses: The expression is Poetical,
but

but the plain meaning of it is, that by mighty Rains, which the common Opinion did ascribe to a special influence of the *Planets*, the River of *Kishon*, near which *Sisera's* Army lay, was by sudden Rains so raised and swoln as to drown the greatest part of that huge Host. For so *Deborah* explains the fighting of the Stars in their courses against *Sisera*: They fought, says she, from Heaven, the stars in their courses fought against *Sisera*, the River of *Kishon* swept them away: As if the Stars, which were supposed by their influence to have caused those sudden and extraordinary Rains, had set themselves in Battel-array against *Sisera* and his Army.

Therefore, let not the mighty man glory in his might, which is so small in it self, but in opposition to God is weakness and nothing. The weakness of God, says *St. Paul*, is stronger than men. All power to do mischief is but impotence, and therefore no matter of boasting: *Why boastest thou thy self, thou Tyrant, that thou art able to do mischief? the goodness of God endureth continually*: The goodness of God is too hard for the pride and malice of man, and will last and hold out when that has tir'd and spent it self.

3. Thirdly, Let not the rich man glory in his riches. In these, men are apt to pride themselves: even the

the meanest and poorest spirits, who have nothing to be proud of but their money, when they have got good store of that together, how will they swell and strut? as if because they are rich and increased in goods they wanted nothing.

But we may do well to consider, that Riches are things without us; not the real excellencies of our Nature, but the accidental ornaments of our Fortune. If they descend upon us, they are the privilege of our Birth, not the effect of our wisdom and industry; and those things in the procurement whereof we had no hand, we can hardly call our own: And if they be the fruit of our own prudent industry, that is no such matter of glorying; because men of much slower understandings do commonly outdo others in diligence and drudging, their minds lying more level to the low design of being rich.

At the best, Riches are uncertain. *Charge them,* says St. Paul, *that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches:* Men have little reason to pride themselves, or to place their confidence in that which is uncertain, and even next to that which is not: So the wise man speaks of Riches, *Wilt thou set thine heart upon that* Prov. 23. *which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings, and fly as an Eagle towards heaven:* He ex-

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presses

presses it in such a manner, as if a rich man sat brooding over an Estate till it was fledg'd and had gotten it self wings to fly away.

But that which is the most stinging consideration of all is, that many men have an evil eye upon a good Estate ; so that instead of being the means of our happiness it may prove the occasion of our ruin : So the same Wise man observes, *There is a sore evil which I have seen under the Sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.* And it is not without example, that a very rich man hath been excepted out of a general Pardon, both as to Life and Estate, for no other visible reason but his vast and overgrown Fortune : So Solomon observes to us again, *Such are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain, which taketh away the life of the owners thereof.* And why should any man be proud of his danger, of that which one time or other may be the certain and only cause of his ruin ? A man may be too rich to be forgiven a fault which would never have been prosecuted against a man of a middle fortune. For these reasons, and a great many more, *Let not the rich man glory in his riches.*

II. I proceed to consider, *What it is that is matter of true glory ? But let him that glorieth glory in this,*

this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, which exercise lovingkindness, and judgment, and righteousness in the Earth: For in these things I delight, saith the Lord.

That he understandeth and knoweth me: Here are two words used to express the thing more fully, *understanding* and *knowledg*; which seem not only to import right apprehensions of the Being, and Providence, and Perfections of God; but likewise a lively sense of these things, and affections suitable to these apprehensions.

That he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, that is the Creator, and the Sovereign Governor of the World.

Which exercise lovingkindness, and judgment, and righteousness in the Earth.

The best knowledg of Religion, and that which is the foundation of all the rest, is the knowledg of the Divine Nature and Perfections: especially of those which are most proper for our imitation; and such are those mentioned in the Text, *lovingkindness*, and *judgment*, and *righteousness*; which we may distinguish thus: *Lovingkindness* comprehends Gods milder Attributes, his *Goodness*, and *Mercy*, and *Patience*: *Judgment* signifies his severer dealings with men, whether in the chastisement of his People, or in

the remarkable punishment of great Offenders for example and warning to others: *Righteousness* seems to be a word of a larger signification, and to denote that universal Rectitude of the Divine Nature which appears in all the administrations of his Providence here below ; for the Text speaks of the exercise of these Perfections in this world: *which exercise lovingkindness, and judgment, and righteousness in the Earth.*

Several of the Perfections of the Divine Nature are incommunicable to a Creature, and therefore cannot be thought to be proposed to us for a Pattern ; as *self-existence, independence, and all-sufficiency* ; the *eternity*, and the *immensity* of the Divine Being ; to be the *original Cause* of all other things, and the *Sovereign Governour* of the whole World : For God only is sufficient for *that* ; and to be a Match for all the World, a *nec pluribus impar*, is not a *Motto* fit for a mortal man. A Creature may swell with pride till it burst, before it can stretch it self to this pitch of Power and Greatness : It is an insufferable presumption, and a sottish Ignorance of the necessary bounds and limits of our Being, to think to resemble God in these Perfections: This was the ambition of *Lucifer*, to *ascend into Heaven*, and to *be like the most High*.

In our imitation of God we must still keep within

within the station of Creatures ; not affecting an independency and sovereignty like God, and to be omnipotent as he is : *Hast thou an arm like God, and canst thou thunder with a voice like Him?* as God himself argues with Job. Job 40. 9.

For in these things I delight, saith the Lord. God takes pleasure to exercise these Perfections himself, and to see them imitated by us ; and the imitation of these Divine Perfections is our perfection and glory ; in comparison of which all human wisdom, and power, and riches, are so far from being matter of glory, that they are very despicable and pitiful things : Knowledge and skill to devise mischief, and power to effect it, are the true nature and Character of the Devil and his Angels ; those Apostate and accursed Spirits, who in temper and disposition are most contrary to God, who is the Rule and Pattern of all perfection.

I shall only make two *Observations* and *Inferences* from what hath been said, and then apply the whole Discourse to the great Occasion of this Day : And they are these.

First, That the wisest and surest Reasonings in Religion are grounded upon the unquestionable Perfections of the Divine Nature.

Secondly,

Secondly, That the Nature of God is the true Idea and Pattern of Perfection and Happiness.

First, *That the wisest and surest Reasonings in Religion are grounded upon the unquestionable Perfections of the Divine Nature*: Upon those more especially which to us are most easie and intelligible: such as are those mentioned in the Text. And this makes the knowledge of God, and of these Perfections, to be so useful and so valuable: Because all Religion is founded in right notions of God, and of his Perfections: Insomuch that Divine Revelation it self does suppose these for its foundation, and can signify nothing to us unless these be first known and believed: For unless we be first firmly persuaded of the Providence of God, and of his particular care of Mankind, why should we suppose that he makes any Revelation of his Will to us? Unless it be first naturally known that God is a God of truth, what ground is there for the belief of his Word? So that the Principles of *Natural Religion* are the foundation of that which is Reveal'd: And therefore nothing can in Reason be admitted to be a Revelation from God, which does plainly contradict his essential Perfections.

Upon

Upon this *Principle*, a great many *Doctrines* are without more ado to be rejected, because they do plainly and at first sight contradict the Divine Nature and Perfections. I will give a few *Instances*, instead of many that might be given.

In vertue of this *Principle* I cannot believe, upon the pretended Authority or Infallibility of any Person or Church, that Force is a fit Argument to produce Faith: No man shall ever persuade me, no not the Bishop of *Meaux* with all his Eloquence, that Prisons and Tortures, Dragons and the Gallies, are proper means to convince the Understanding, and either *Christian* or *Human* methods of converting men to the true Religion.

For the same Reason I cannot believe, that God would not have men to understand their publick Prayers, nor the Lessons of Scripture which are read to them: Because a Lesson is something that is to be learnt, and therefore a Lesson, that is not to be understood is nonsense; for if it be not understood how can it be learnt?

As little can I believe, that God who caused the *Holy Scriptures* to be written for the instruction of mankind, did ever intend that *they* should be

be lock'd up and concealed from the People in an unknown Tongue.

Least of all can I believe that *Doctrine* of the Council of *Trent*, That the saving efficacy of the *Sacraments* doth depend upon the intention of the Priest that administers them: Which is to say, that though the People believe and live never so well, yet they may be damn'd by shoals, and whole Parishes together, at the pleasure of the Priest: And this for no other reason, but because the Priest is so cross and so cruel that he will not intend to save them.

Now can any man believe this, that hath any tolerable notion either of the Goodness or Justice of God? May we not appeal to God in this, as *Abraham* did in another Case? *Wilt thou destroy the righteous with the wicked? That be far from thee, to do after this manner: Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right?* Much more, to destroy the righteous for the wicked, and that righteous and innocent People should lye at the mercy and will of a wicked and perverse Priest, to be sav'd or damn'd by him as he thinks fit, *That be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right?* For, to drive the argument to the head, if this be to do right there is no possibility of doing wrong.

Thus

Thus in things which are more obscure we should govern all our Reasonings concerning God and Religion by that which is clear and unquestionable, and should with *Moses* lay down this for a certain Principle, *All his wayes are judgment, a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is He*: And say with *St. Paul*, *Is there then unrighteousness with God? God forbid? And again, We know that the Judgment of God is according to truth.*

2ly, The other Inference is this, *That the Nature of God is the true Idea and Pattern of Perfection and Happiness*: And therefore nothing but our conformity to it can make us happy: And for this reason, to understand and know God is our great excellency and glory, because it is necessary to our imitation of *Him* who is the best and happiest Being. And so far as we are from resembling God, so far are we distant from Happiness and the true temper of the Blessed. For Goodness is an essential ingredient of Happiness; and as without Goodness there can be no true Majesty and Greatness, so neither any true Felicity and Blessedness.

Now Goodness is a generous disposition of mind to diffuse and communicate it self by making others to partake of our Happiness, in such degrees as they are capable: For no Being is so happy as it might be, that hath not the power and the pleasure to make others happy: This surely is the highest pleasure, I had almost said pride, of a great Mind.

In vain therefore do we dream of Happiness in any thing without us. Happiness must be within us; the foundation of it must be laid in the inward frame and disposition of our spirits: And the very same causes and ingredients which make up the Happiness of God must be found in us, though in a much inferior degree, or we can not be happy. They understand not the nature of Happiness, who hope for it upon any other termes: He who is the Author and fountain of Happiness can not convey it to us by any other way, than by planting in us such dispositions of mind as are in truth a kind of participation of the Divine Nature; and by enduing us with such qualities as are the necessary materials of Happiness: And a man may as soon be well without Health as happy without Goodness.

If a wicked man were taken up into Heaven, yet if he still continue the same bad man that he was before, *cælum, non animum mutavit*, he may have chang'd the *Climate*, and be gone into a far Countrey ; but because he carries *himself* still along with him, he will still be miserable from himself : Because the mans mind is not chang'd all the while, which would signify a thousand times more to his happiness, than change of place, or of any outward circumstances whatsoever : For a bad man hath a *Fiend* in his own Brest, and the fewel of Hell in his guilty Conscience.

There is a certain kind of temper and disposition which is necessary and essential to Happiness, and *that* is Holiness and Goodness, which is the very Nature of God ; and so far as any man departs from this temper, so far he removes himself and runs away from happiness. And here the foundation of Hell is laid, in the evil disposition of a mans own mind, which is naturally a torment to it self : And till this be cur'd, it is as impossible for him to be happy, as for a Limb that is out of joint to be at ease ; because the mans Spirit is out of order, and off the hinges, and as it were toss'd from its Center ; and till that ~~be~~ be set right,

and restored to its proper and natural state, the man will be perpetually unquiet, and can have no rest and peace within himself. *The wicked, saith the Prophet, is like the troubled Sea, when it cannot rest : There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked : No peace with God, no peace with his own mind ; for a bad man is at perpetual discord and Wars within himself : And hence, as St. James tells us, come Wars and fightings without us, even from our Lusts which warr in our members.*

And now that I have mention'd *Wars and fightings without us*, this cannot but bring to mind the great and glorious Occasion of this Day : Which gives us manifold Cause of Praise and Thanksgiving to Almighty God : For several wonderful Mercies and Deliverances ; and more particularly, for a most glorious Victory at Sea, vouchsafed to Their *Majesties* Fleet in this last Summers Expedition.

For several great Mercies and Deliverances : For a wonderful Deliverance indeed, from a sudden *Invasion* design'd upon us by the inveterate and implacable Enemies of our Peace and Religion ; which by the merciful Providence of God was happily and strangely prevented, when it was just upon the point of execution.

Next,

Next, for the preservation of our *Gracious Sovereign*, from that horrid and most barbarous Attempt design'd upon his Sacred Person : And from those great and manifold Dangers to which he was expos'd in his late tedious Expedition : And for His safe and most welcome Return to us.

And lastly , For a most glorious *Victory at Sea* : The greatest and the cheapest that ever the Sun saw, from his first setting out to run his Course. The Opportunity indeed of this Victory was through the rashness and confidence of our Enemies, by the wise Providence of God put into our hands : But the improvement of this Opportunity into so great and happy a Victory we owe, under God , to the matchless Conduct and Courage of the Brave *Admiral*, and to the invincible Resolution and Valour of the *Captains* and *Seamen*.

This great Deliverance from the design'd *Invasion*, and this glorious *Victory*, God vouchsaf'd to us at *Home*, whilst His Sacred Majesty was so freely hazarding his Royal Person *abroad*, in the Publick Cause of the Rights and Liberties of almost all *Europe*.

And

And now what may God justly expect from us, as a meet return for his Goodness to us? What? but that we should glorifie Him, first by offering praise and thanksgiving; and then, by ordering our conversation aright, that he may still delight to shew us his Salvation.

God might have stood aloof from us in the Day of our distress, and have said to us, as He once did to the People of Israel, so often have I delivered you from the hands of your Enemies, but ye have still provok'd me more and more, *Wherefore I will deliver you no more:* He might have said of us, as he did of the same People, *I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: For they are a very forward generation, children in whom is no faith: Our resolutions and promises of better obedience are not to be trusted; all our Repentance and Righteousness are but as the morning cloud, and like the early dew which passeth away: Nay methinks God seems now to say to us, as he did of old* *to Jerusalem, Be instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my soul depart from thee, and I make thee desolate, a Land not inhabited.*

We are here met together this Day, to pay our Solemn acknowledgments to the God of our Salvation; who hath shewed strength with his arm, and

and hath scattered the proud in the imaginations of their heart: Even to him that exerciseth loving kindness, and judgment, and righteousness in the Earth: In Him will we glory, as our sure Refuge and Defence, as our mighty Deliverer, and the Rock of our Salvation.

And now I have only to entreat your patience a little longer, whilst I apply what hath been discoursed upon this *Text* a little more closely to the Occasion of this Day. I may be tedious, but I will not be long.

And blessed be God for this happy *Occasion*: The greatest *England* ever had, and, in the true consequences of it, perhaps the greatest that *Europe* ever had of Praise and Thanksgiving.

You have heard two sorts of Persons described in the *Text*, by very different Characters: The *One*, that glory in their *Wisdom*, and *Might*, and *Riches*: The *other*, that glory in this, that they understand and know God to be the Lord, which exerciseth loving kindness, and judgment, and righteousness in the Earth.

And we have seen these two Characters exemplified, or rather drawn to the Life, in this present Age. We who live in this Western part of *Christendom* have seen a mighty Prince, by the

the just permission of God rais'd up to be a Terrour and Scourge to all his Neighbours : A *Prince*, who had in perfection all the Advantages mentioned in the former part of the *Text* : And who, in the opinion of many who had been long dazzled with his Splendour and Greatness, hath pass'd for many years, for the most *Politick*, and *Powerful*, and *Richest Monarch* that hath appear'd in these parts of the World, for many Ages :

Who hath govern'd his Affairs by the deepest and steddyeest Counsels, and the most refin'd Wisdom of this World : A Prince mighty and Powerful in his Preparations for War ; formidable for his vast and well disciplin'd Armies, and for his great Naval Force : And who had brought the Art of War almost to that perfection, as to be able to Conquer and do his business without fighting : A Mystery hardly known to former Ages and Generations : And all this Skill and Strength united under one absolute Will, not hamper'd or bound up by any restraints of Law or Conscience.

A Prince that commands the Estates of all his Subjects, and of all his Conquests ; which hath furnish'd him with an almost inexhaustible

ble Treasure and Revenue : And One, who if the World doth not greatly mistake him ; hath sufficiently *gloried* in all these Advantages, and even beyond the rate of a mortal man.

But not *knowing* God to be the Lord, which exercises loving-kindness, and judgment, and righteousness in the Earth ; How hath the pride of all his Glory been stain'd by Tyranny and Oppression, by Injustice and Cruelty ; by enlarging his Dominions without Right, and by making War upon his Neighbours without Reason, or even colour of Provocation ? And this in a more Barbarous manner than the most Barbarous Nations ever did ; carrying Fire and Desolation wheresoever he went, and laying waste many and great Cities without necessity, and without pity.

And now behold what a terrible Rebuke the Providence of God hath given to this mighty Monarch, in the full Carrier of his Fortune and Fury. The consideration whereof brings to my thoughts those Passages in the Prophet concerning old *Babylon*, that standing and perpetual Type of the great Oppressors and Persecutors of Gods true Church and Religion : *How is the Oppressour ceased ? the exactour* Isa. 14. *of gold ceased ? He who smote the People in wrath with*

a continual stroke, he who ruled the Nations in anger is himself persecuted, and none hindreth. The whole Earth is at rest and is quiet, and breaks forth into singing : The grave beneath is moved for thee, to meet thee at thy coming ; it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the Captains of the Earth ; it hath raised up from their Thrones all the Kings of the Nations ; all they shall speak and say unto thee, art thou also become weak as we are ? art thou also become like unto us ? How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the morning ? How art thou cut down to the ground that didst weaken the Nations ? For thou hast said in thy heart, I will ascend into Heaven, I will exalt my Throne above the Stars of God : I will sit also upon the Mount of the Congregation in the sides of the North, That is, upon Mount Zion, for just so the Psalmist describes it, Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole Earth is Mount Zion, on the sides of the North. Here the King of Babylon threatens to take Jerusalem, and to demolish the Temple where the Congregation of Israel met for the Worship of the true God ; I will also sit upon the Mount of the Congregation in the sides of the North, Much in the same Style with the threatnings of Modern Babylon, I will destroy the Reformation, I will extirpate the Northern Herefie.

Pl. 48. 2.

And

And then he goes on, *I will ascend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the most High : Yet thou shalt be brought down to the grave, to the sides of the pit : They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake Kingdoms ; that made the World as a Wilderness, and destroyed the Cities thereof, and opened not the House of his Prisoners ?*

God seems already to have begun this Work, in the late glorious Victory at Sea ; and I hope he will cut it short in righteousness. I have sometimes heretofore wondred, Why at the destruction of Modern and Mystical *Babylon* the Scripture should make so expresse mention of great wailing and lamentation for the loss of Her Ships and Seamen : Little imagining, thirty years ago, that any of the Kingdoms who had ^{Rev. 18.} given their power to the Beast would ever have arrived to that mighty Naval Force : But the Scripture saith nothing in vain.

Whether, and how far, Success is an argument of a good Cause : I shall not now debate : But thus much, I think, may safely be affirmed, That the Providence of God doth sometimes, without plain and downright Miracles, so visibly shew it self, that we cannot with-

out great stupidity and obstinacy refuse to acknowledge it.

I grant, the Cause must first be manifestly just, before Success can be made an Argument of Gods favour to it and approbation of it : And if the Cause of true Religion, and the necessary defence of it against a false and Idolatrous Worship, be a good Cause, *Ours* is so : And I do not here beg the Question ; we have abundantly proved it to the confusion of our Adversaries : If the vindication of the common Liberties of Mankind, against Tyranny and Oppression, be a good Cause, then *Ours* is so : And this needs not to be proved, it is so glaringly evident to all the World And as *our* Cause is not like *theirs*, so neither hath *their* Rock been like *our* Rock, *our* Enemies themselves being Judges.

And yet as bad an argument as success is of a good Cause, I am sorry to say it, but I am afraid it is true, it is like in the conclusion to prove the best Argument of all other to convince those who have so long pretended conscience against submission to the present Government.

Meer Success is certainly one of the worst Arguments in the World of a good Cause, and the most improper to satisfy Conscience : And
yet

yet we find by experience, that in the issue it is the most successful of all other Arguments ; and do's in a very odd but effectual way satisfy the Consciences of a great many men by shewing them their Interest.

God has of late visibly made bare his Arm in our behalf, though some are still so blind and obstinate that they will not see it : Like those of whom the Prophet complains, *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up they will not see, but they shall see,* ^{Isa. 25.} *and be ashamed for their envy at thy People.* ^{11.}

Thus have I represented unto you a mighty Monarch, who like a fiery Comet hath hung over Europe for many years ; and by his malignant influence hath made such terrible havock and devastations in this part of the World.

Let us now turn our View to the other part of the Text : And behold a greater than he is here : A Prince of a quite different Character, who does *understand and know* God to be the Lord, *which doth exercise loving-kindness and judgment and righteousness in the Earth* : And who hath made it the great Study and Endeavour of his life to imitate these Divine Perfections, as far as the imperfection of humane nature in this mortal state will admit : I say, a greater than he is here ; who never said or did an insolent thing,
but

but instead of despising his Enemies has upon all occasions encounter'd them with an undaunted Spirit and resolution.

This is the Man whom God hath honoured to give a Check to this Mighty Man of the Earth, and to put a hook into the Nostrils of this great *Leviathan* who has so long had his pastime in the Seas.

But we will not insult, as He once did in a most unprincely manner over a Man much better than himself, when he believed Him to have been slain at the *Boyne* : And indeed Death came then as near to him as was possible without killing him : But the merciful Providence of God was pleased to step in for his Preservation, almost by a Miracle: For I do not believe that from the first use of great Guns to *that* Day, any mortal man ever had his shoulder so kindly kiss'd by a Canon bullet.

But I will not trespass any further upon that which is the great Ornament of all his other Vertues ; though I have said nothing of Him but what all the World does see and must acknowledge : He is as much above being flatter'd, as it is beneath an honest and a generous mind to flatter.

Let

Let us then glory in the Lord, and rejoyce in the God of our Salvation: Let us now in the presence of all his People pay our most thankful acknowledgments to him *who is worthy to be praised*; even to the Lord God of Israel *who alone doth wondrous things*: Who giveth Victory unto Kings, and hath preserved our David his Servant from the hurtful Sword.

And let us humbly beseech Almighty God, that he would long preserve to us the invaluable Blessing of our two Excellent Princes; whom the Providence of God hath sent amongst us, like two good Angels; not to rescue two or three persons, but almost a whole Nation out of *Sodom*: By saving us I hope at last from our Vices, as well as at first from that Vengeance which was just ready to have been poured down upon us.

Two Sovereign Princes reigning together, and in the same Throne; and yet so intirely one, as perhaps no Nation, no Age can furnish us with a Parallel: Two Princes perfectly united in the same Design of promoting the true Religion, and the Publick Welfare, by reforming our Manners, and, as far as is possible, by repairing the breaches, and healing the Divisions of a miserably distracted Church and Nation:

Nation : In a Word, Two Princes who are contented to sacrifice Themselves and their whole Time to the care of the Publick : And for the sake of that to deny themselves almost all sort of ease and pleasure : *To deny themselves*, did I say? No, they have wisely and judiciously chosen the truest and highest Pleasure that this World knows, the Pleasure of doing good, and being Benefactors to mankind. May they have a long and happy Reign over us, to make us happy, and to lay up in store for Themselves A Happiness without measure, and without end, in Gods glorious and everlasting Kingdom : for his Mercies sake in *Jesus Christ*, to whom with thee, *O Father*, and the *Holy Ghost*, be all Honour and Glory, Thanksgiving and Praise, both now and for ever.
Amen.

F I N I S.

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